

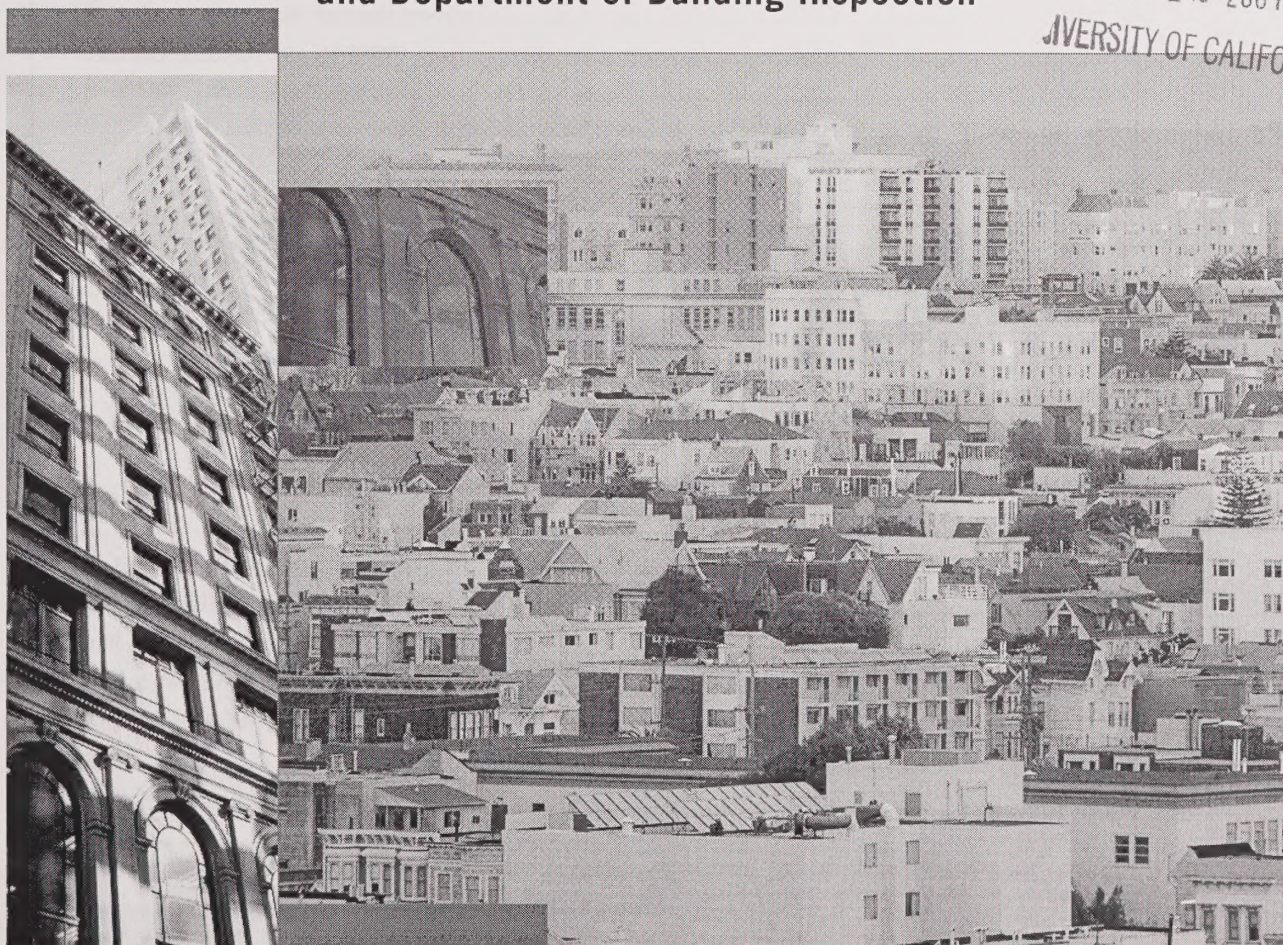
PLANNING THE CITY'S FUTURE

An Agenda for Change in the
San Francisco Planning Department
and Department of Building Inspection

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A JOINT REPORT FROM AIA SAN FRANCISCO AND SPUR



March 1, 2004

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San Francisco Planning Department
and Department of Building Inspection



A JOINT REPORT

San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
www.aiasf.org

San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association
www.spur.org

March 1, 2004

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

San Francisco's planning and building process is in trouble. Funding for the Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection has been cut. Staff morale is down. The Planning Commission is overwhelmed with fights around specific development proposals and does not have enough time to work on true long-range planning. As faith in the planning and permitting process has waned, the Board of Supervisors has increasingly taken on the role of *de facto* Planning Commission, calling hearings on virtually every major decision the Commission has made. After so many battles over planning issues, there is a growing cynicism about the ability of City government to ever actually work out compromises or satisfactory solutions.

The Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection are extremely important, they are places where many citizens and neighbors have contact with our government. Active citizens spend hundreds or even thousands of hours commenting on projects that affect them, only to feel they are not heard. Businesses wonder if they will ever be allowed to expand, so they take their jobs elsewhere. Investors in housing development are leery of the city's famous unpredictability, so they take their money elsewhere. A whole new profession of "expeditors" has emerged to deal with the situation, giving the impression of favoritism.

Meanwhile, the results of the broken planning process are affecting people's lives in tangible ways. Young families are forced out of town because of a horrendous housing shortage, even though there is available land and developers ready to build. Public institutions like our libraries and museums have their building plans delayed and stalled. And the quality of life for the entire city declines.

It's time to intervene. We believe it doesn't have to be this way. It is possible, not to make everyone happy, but to make progress on the big problems we face as a city—the high cost of housing, the frustration with our transportation network, the continuing tragedy of homelessness, the decline of our public spaces, and the loss of the city's job base. These are all problems that other central cities in the United States have faced, and they are all problems that have solutions. The planning and building functions are important to all of them.

Improving San Francisco's Planning and Building Inspection departments will have a positive effect on the San Francisco economy. When a city is well planned it encourages economic investment. This in turn provides resources for higher quality schools, open space, and other amenities of an attractive city. It creates an incentive for increasing our housing stock, as well as creating a climate where businesses large and small will want to remain and grow. And as neighborhoods benefit from the improved public and private realm, change becomes less frightening and even sought after.

In the fall of 2003, the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) and the San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) convened a task force to examine San Francisco's Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection, the two departments most responsible for managing the evolution of the built environment in San Francisco. The AIA and SPUR met with interested parties, including staff members of the Planning Department and the Building Department. The Task Force worked to define the problems both departments face today, and to propose pragmatic reforms that can help them work better. In other words, the task force looked at the management, work process, funding, and governance issues.

We believe these recommendations to reform the planning and building inspection functions in San Francisco will bring these departments to excellence, rebuild the public

confidence, and allow the Supervisors and Mayor to get on with the important work of governing the city.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Major themes developed in the report include:

- Conduct a national search for the Planning Director and give the Director the tools to effectively manage the department.
- Clarify the division of labor between the Commission, Director, staff, Mayor, and Board of Supervisors. In general terms, we believe that the planning process will work best when the Board of Supervisors can focus its energy on planning, but not on the review of specific buildings.
- Restore consistent General Fund support to the Planning Department.
- Focus on neighborhood plans as the tool to build consensus about what changes are desirable, with the goal of reducing conflict at the project approval stage. While the Better Neighborhoods program has had its problems, this model holds out the greatest hope the city has of restoring faith in the planning process.
- Hold the department accountable to finish its work on time and on budget. Conversely, hold the Board of Supervisors accountable to respect the staff's work and to allow the staff to complete work assigned to it during the budget process.
- Find ways to allow the Planning Commission to focus more on big-picture planning. This means reducing time spent on project review and appeals.
- Improve interdepartmental coordination between the Planning Department and other City agencies. This is important both with other agencies involved with the development process (such as the Redevelopment Agency and the Port) and with agencies responsible for the public realm (such as Muni, Rec. & Park, the Department of Public Works).
- Improve the coordination between the Planning Department and the Department of Building Inspection, both in terms of conflicts between the codes and to make sure that residents have trust that projects will not change dramatically after they are approved.
- Invest more resources in code compliance and enforcement in both departments, so that residents have faith that plans and rules will be followed.
- Update the fees in both departments.
- Invest more in staff development and Commission training in both departments.

THE GOAL

The goal is to develop a vision for change that will help the new Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, the two commissions, and the two department heads make lasting reforms to the planning and building process.

Even in the best of worlds, some people will be unhappy with the work of these two departments for the simple reason that we don't all agree about what direction the city should be going in. It's important to acknowledge this fact: often, when people are angry at something "government" does, they are in fact angry at something their fellow citizens have worked hard to get government to do.

Nevertheless, we believe that there are many opportunities for improving these departments and the services they offer. Resources can be used more efficiently. Time and attention can be focused on the big issues. Coordination with other departments can improve. Leadership and internal management can be enhanced. Employee satisfaction and performance can increase. In the larger sense, what we're talking about is restoring public confidence that the planning and building processes are fair, that decisions are guided by a long-term vision of a more livable city, and that the democratic process is being applied.

CHAPTER 1: THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1.1 GOVERNANCE

1.1.1 Issues and Opportunities

Declining public confidence in the Planning Department and the City Planning Commission over the last several years is closely tied to the growing role of the Board of Supervisors as the arbiter of planning decisions. As the public has lost confidence in the planning process, the Board of Supervisors has been called on to act. As the Board of Supervisors overturns Planning Commission decisions and as more of the planning function is managed by the legislative branch of government, it becomes harder for the Planning Department to do its job. In addition, the City has essentially stopped providing General Fund support to the Planning Department, forcing it to rely almost entirely on fees for processing permits.

Because of the lack of confidence, individual project reviews have become more contentious, taking up the majority of time at the Commission. This, combined with the absence of General Fund support and years of lack of Mayoral focus on long-range planning, has caused the department to expend more of its resources on individual projects rather than on “big picture” planning concerns. Where big picture planning efforts have been initiated, these have been left incomplete, due in part to poor management, lack of resources, and unclear or changing priorities.

Over the past year, the Board of Supervisors has started to be viewed as the *de facto* planning commission, yet has no planning staff of its own and often eschews the professional advice offered by the Planning Department, the staff of which it doesn’t regard as its own. The Board is spending hundreds of hours reviewing individual projects. Any project of significant size can count on having to receive both Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors approval. Project sponsors are not just asked to comply with zoning; they are asked to fund “public benefits” and other requests that emerge from the political process. In addition, sponsors of even the best projects face enormous political uncertainty.

The Supervisors’ involvement in project review has been encouraged by several legislative changes:

- In 2000, San Francisco moved to a system of district elections for electing supervisors. Under this system, elected officials have an almost impossible time prioritizing citywide needs over neighborhood-specific concerns. There is a growing trend to allow Supervisors to decide what gets built and what doesn’t within their districts.
- In 2001, the Supervisors changed the conditional use (CU) permit appeals requirement from 20% of neighboring property-owners’ signatures to only five Supervisors’ signatures. Objecting neighbors ask their Supervisor to appeal a CU permit. As a favor, four other Supervisors sign on, regardless of the merits. This has meant costly delays for many worthy projects, as well as many extra hearings—sometime going into the early hours of the morning—for the Supervisors.
- In March 2002, the voters adopted Proposition D to restructure the selection of Planning Commissioners and Board of Appeals Commissioners. Prop D gave the President of the Board of Supervisors the responsibility for nominating three of the seven Planning Commissioners (the Mayor still nominates the other four), two of the five members of the Board of Permit Appeals (the Mayor still nominates three) and required the Board of Supervisors to approve all seven of the nominees of the Planning Commission and all five nominees of the Board of Permit Appeals,

including the Mayor's. This change in governance means that the Mayor can no longer direct the Planning Department as part of a broader policy agenda.

- On January 1, 2003, an amendment to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21151(c)) went into effect, permitting appeals to the Board of Supervisors of all CEQA determinations by the staff and the Planning Commission, no matter how routine. Although environmental review is supposed to be a technical exercise to provide decision-makers with information and disclose environmental impacts, elected officials now have the option to “turn down” environmental reviews if they don’t like a project. So far, the Supervisors have not been willing to impose upon themselves any procedural thresholds or criteria that would “weed out” appeals with little legitimate basis.

This report does not propose going back to a Mayoral-appointed commission. The current system of appointing commissioners, with both its strengths and its weaknesses, is here and is not likely to go away anytime soon. Within that context, we propose recommendations that will improve the governance of the Planning Department, clarify accountability, and restore faith that the department is solving the problems facing the city.

An overriding thesis of the Governance section of this report is that the division of labor between the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission needs to be clarified. We believe that the Board of Supervisors must continue to be involved with planning—adopting the General Plan, changing the planning code, establishing zoning, expending City resources—but should not be involved with permitting specific projects. The Planning Commission should have sole responsibility for project review.

1.1.2 Governance Recommendations

1. The new Mayor and Planning Commission need to establish specific criteria for the selection of the Planning Director. This position requires two overarching competencies: vision and management. Any new candidates for the position should also be skilled in community out-reach, consensus building and organizing departmental resources to serve these ends. San Francisco needs and deserves a Planning Director equal to the best in the nation.
2. The Planning Director should have a team of senior staff (e.g. three positions) that is exempt from civil service so that the director can assemble a team of people who will best support the departmental priorities and complement the Director's skills. Ideally, there should be a Charter amendment to establish this as a permanent City policy; however, the Director can request these positions from the Civil Service Commission.
3. The Planning Director, working with the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and the Planning Commission, should establish a set of planning priorities and articulate a broader, bigger-picture strategy that can be accomplished over the next few years. The Department has begun an effort—called the Citywide Action Plan—which could well form the nucleus of such a strategy. The leadership of the department needs to embrace that effort, however modified, to meet new priorities, and the Mayor and Board need to provide enough staff and consultant resources to carry it out.
4. Members of the Planning Commission and Board of Appeals hold termed positions. At a future date, the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors will have the opportunity to appoint new commissioners to both bodies. Required qualifications should be established for these positions. Some of the appointees should have proficiency in architectural design or planning, to assist other members in deliberating the technical issues that are brought to each commission. Professional organizations outside of

City government could assist in peer reviews of candidates to ensure that appointees meet these qualifications.

5. The City should provide training and orientation to new commissioners on land use law, the environmental review process, the General Plan, San Francisco's zoning map, and fundamental concepts of urban planning.
6. It takes five Supervisors' signatures to bring an appeal of a CU permit to the Board of Supervisors to consider overturning a Planning Commission decision. Before this threshold can be changed, faith needs to be restored in the Planning Commission and Department at both the Board of Supervisors and the community at large. The ultimate goal should be to raise the appeal of a CU permit to eight signatures, the number formerly required to sustain an appeal submitted by property owners surrounding the project site.
7. The Planning Department needs to be more accountable to the Board of Supervisors for developing accurate project budgets and delivering work products on time and on budget. Conversely, the Board of Supervisors needs to be accountable to not de-fund projects once they have been started. With the Better Neighborhoods plans, the Rincon Hill plan, and the Transbay plan, the process has become extremely chaotic because part of the way through the planning, work was de-funded and work ground to a halt. It may sound obvious, but we need to build a working culture that emphasizes the need to finish projects before moving on to new ones.
8. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors should try to restore some sense of rationality to the environmental review process by establishing procedural thresholds for hearing CEQA reviews. The Board should assume that, as a rule, professional environmental review staff members have done their job. Alternatively, the City should seek to revise the State statutes to permit CEQA appeals to the Board only when the permit itself is appealable to the Board.

1.2. PLANNING DEPARTMENT WORKLOAD AND FUNDING

1.2.1 Issues and Opportunities

The Planning Department has seen dramatic changes in both funding and workload over the last several years and has been unable to provide consistent service to the “customers” who apply for permits or other reviews and approvals, and to the city as a whole, which thirsts for the creative visioning, community process, and problem solving that long-range-planning activities can provide. Viewed in the context of a troubled economy, these deficiencies have become a crisis of critical proportions. If our Planning Department is under-funded, overwhelmed, and unable to deliver, San Francisco will be slow to experience economic recovery, our housing crisis will continue unabated, and a broad cross section of San Franciscans will be forced out or left behind.

The Planning Department’s current state of affairs is not the fault of one precept or one person, but has been long in the making. It was during the economic downturn of the early 1990s that the “cost recovery” philosophy was adopted, initiating a gradual shift in funding. Before that time, the Department was largely supported by the City’s General Fund, and as a result was able to devote substantial resources to long-range-planning activities. The reliance on fees for service gained momentum, and was completed in Fiscal Year 2003–2004, with adoption of a Department budget that is now entirely fee supported (see Table 1).

During the same period, little meaningful change in the human resources system or the City’s budgeting and hiring practices has meant that the Department finds it difficult to fill positions and difficult to appropriately reward the high performers and ease out low performers. In addition, the fragmentation of authority discussed in 1.1.2 Governance Recommendations (p. 6) has politicized the planning process more than ever before, effectively giving the Planning Director almost two dozen “bosses,” and creating multiple venues and multiple hearings for many planning activities.

Resource constraints, both financial and human, coupled with rising workloads and political pressures have created an atmosphere in which reflection is difficult, real systemic changes impossible, and the city’s expectations are not being met.

A key section of the Planning Department is the Major Environmental Analysis staff, who determine if and how much impact a project will have—and, in turn, how long the environmental review process will take, how extensive it will be, and how many hearings will be necessary. This section of the Department—even though self-supported by environmental evaluation fees—is severely understaffed, and has been recently cut back. As a consequence, there is a serious backlog of cases, to the extent that cases are not even assigned to a planner until several months after an application is filed.

Another problem with the intra-departmental coordination of the Planning Department is a disconnect between the Long Range Planning Division and the Implementation Division. With unfinished work projects remaining in the Long Range Planning Division, the staff in the Implementation Division has become overwhelmed by a contradiction in policies.

Table 1: San Francisco Planning Department Funding Sources and Expenditures by Division
FY1999–00 Through FY2003–04

	1999–2000	% of Total	2000–2001	% of Total	2001–2002	% of Total	2002–2003	% of Total	2003–2004	% of Total
Funding Sources										
Fees	7,537,000	61%	7,805,000	62%	10,786,000	69%	7,613,200	56%	8,990,783	68%
General Fund	3,300,000	27%	3,300,000	26%	3,000,000	19%	4,125,000	30%	0	0%
Grants/Work Orders	1,472,000	12%	1,586,000	12%	1,892,000	12%	1,968,000	14%	1,946,853	15%
									Other: 2,298,225 ¹	17%
Total	12,309,000	100%	12,691,000	100%	15,678,000	100%	13,706,200	100%	13,235,861	100%
Activity Areas										
Neighborhood Planning	5,600,000	46%	5,472,000	47%	6,701,000	43%	6,506,500	48%	6,244,250	47%
Citywide Policy	2,660,000	22%	2,918,000	25%	4,175,000	27%	3,202,700	23%	2,894,649	22%
Information Services	1,615,000	13%	1,745,000	15%	2,394,000	15%	1,895,500	14%	1,731,218	13%
Environmental Review	2,029,000	16%	1,098,000	9%	2,408,000	15%	2,102,100	15%	2,365,744	18%
Special Projects	405,000	3%	445,000	4%						
Total	12,309,000	100%	11,678,000	100%	15,678,000	100%	13,706,800	100%	13,235,861	100%

¹: Revenue transfer from the Department of Building Inspection received in lieu of General Fund Support.

Source: San Francisco Planning Department. Information collated by Leiasa Beckham for SPUR and the AIA, October 2003.

1.2.1.1 Predictability & Scheduling

Being able to predict the time and steps involved in processing a planning application is desirable for the homeowner who is adding a room or a deck, to the business owner adding a sign or a storefront, to the developer building new housing, and to anyone else who requires authorization from the City. Conversely, the lack of predictability increases project costs and frustrations. Even as a “slow growth” strategy, the lack of predictability is inefficient and costly.

In an effort to enhance predictability and timely actions by local jurisdictions, the California Permit Streamlining Act requires set timelines for project review once an application has been filed. The Act requires that the City respond within 30 days to confirm that the application is complete and then act on the permit (either within the Department in the case of building permits or through a hearing before the Planning Commission in the case of CU and discretionary review [DR] cases) within a set period of time. Similarly, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that negative declarations be completed within 180 days and environmental impact reports be completed within one year. In recent years, the Planning Department’s workload has been such that Streamlining Act and CEQA deadlines are routinely ignored and even the initial staff response can take months. Then, hearing dates are not set based on consistent criteria. Additionally, the City Administrative Code has not yet been amended to deal with defining what is a timely period for appealing a CEQA review, resulting in a conflict with basic CEQA laws.

The Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission should help to address workload issues and demand procedural changes to ensure that the Planning Department is in compliance with the California Permit Streamlining Act and CEQA. For example, the

Department should use internal guidelines or model documents to ensure standard formats for environmental documents, case reports, and motions. The Department should also establish standard timelines or procedural benchmarks for these documents, and a “triage” system for screening all applications when they are received. Standard procedures or criteria should be established for setting hearing dates, and Department staff should be asked to consistently communicate reasonable schedule expectations.

1.2.1.2 Workload Adjustments

Instead of undertaking comprehensive neighborhood planning and then trusting the outcome of the planning by permitting conforming projects to proceed, San Francisco’s propensity is to make many kinds of uses conditional uses, rather than permitted uses. Most of the time of the staff and the Planning Commission is spent on reviewing conditional uses. This often occurs even after extensive neighborhood planning has taken place, increasing uncertainty for both neighbors and project proponents.

For example, since the 1970s, any project in an “R” (residential)-zoned district that is more than 40 feet (three or four stories high) requires CU approval. This means that the project must go through an extra set of hearings, review, and potential appeal even if the project design fits all Planning Codes and General Plan policies for height and bulk. A typical example is that every building in the Tenderloin, where height limits are higher than 40 feet, must go through the riskier process of trying to get a CU permit. Perhaps the city is ready, on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, to allow buildings to go up to the zoned height limit without automatically forcing them through the CU process. Many housing developments over 40 feet in height could easily be handled on the staff level, and referred to a Commission for review only if there is serious neighborhood concern.

There are certainly other similar opportunities to strengthen the planning function by moving toward a rule-based, as-of-right zoning system instead of a discretionary, conditionally permitting zoning system. The general point is that we should be clear in our zoning about what we want in a given location, and then make it easier for projects that fit that description to move forward, rather than fighting over each parcel.

Currently, the Planning Commission’s time is often dominated by fights over individual projects, leaving little time for bigger-picture, long-range-planning issues. Discretionary Review cases also consume huge amounts of staff time and Departmental resources. For the owner of the property in question, the DR process can turn into a nightmare in which he or she has no idea what will eventually be allowed to be built, or how long it will take to find out. There is nothing that prevents the Commission from delegating its discretionary review powers to Planning Department staff for certain kinds of cases, and the Department and the Commission have begun to take steps in this direction. The Board of Supervisors should support the Planning Commission and amend Sections 311 and 312 of the Planning Code to allow delegation of discretionary review authority back to the Planning Department staff.

Other workload problems are created by the failure of the Board of Appeals to uphold the planning staff’s or Commission’s finding that a project does not comply with duly adopted policy. There is a perception that the Board of Appeals instinctively tries to find the “middle ground” on virtually every appeal, regardless of how bad a project is or what the relevant City policies are. The Planning approval process is currently set up to allow significant staff-level review and modification of a project so that what ends up going before the Planning Commission typically is Code-complying and recommended for approval. Projects that cannot be made Code-complying are either denied at the Commission, or preemptively disapproved at a staff level. But, while disapprovals are much more infrequent than approvals, they are often difficult to make “stick” at the Board of Appeals. What this means is that the Board too often overturns the Planning Commission, approving, for instance, illegal secondary units or the demolition of sound housing or does not allow the rejection of ill-designed projects. More often, these projects are sent back to Planning for more work. This creates a culture within the Planning Department in which it is impossible

to say no to or summarily dismiss a non-complying project. Staff end up spending large amounts of time working with project sponsors on redesigns when, in some cases, it would be in the city's best interests to say no, and allow the land owner to come back with a different project at a later date.

1.2.1.3 Fees

The Planning Department currently uses three kinds of fees: valuation fees based on the cost of construction, time and materials fees, and flat fees. The new Mayor should ask the Controller, under his new authority as the City Services Auditor (November 2003's Prop. C) to review and consider options for regularizing these fees. The Controller should also expand his previous review of fee collection procedures to encompass all fees collected by the Planning Department, and should recommend quality assurance measures to improve the time-keeping data upon which fees are based. The audit should also consider whether the current fee surcharge for financing the building at 1660 Mission Street could be expanded to cover information technology systems.

1.2.1.4 Funding for Neighborhood Plans

Other strategies for increasing revenues should also be pursued aggressively. For example, Specific Area Plans, such as the Better Neighborhoods planning effort, are a concept favored by State law, and are increasingly being used in San Francisco. These are comprehensive neighborhood plans that can include both rezoning and plans for improved public infrastructure, which can be "pre-approved" through a master environmental impact review. When individual projects are proposed, no separate EIR needs to be prepared because the program EIR has already anticipated impacts, and mitigation measures have already been developed. Having a final program EIR in place can shorten the review period of individual projects by six months to two years, thereby greatly reducing costs. In addition, individual projects derive benefits from the increased certainty and community outreach associated with the planning process.

Examples of such pro-active planning in San Francisco are the Rincon Hill Plan (1985); the Van Ness Corridor Plan (1989); and the new Rincon Hill Plan and the three Better Neighborhoods Plan areas, which are still pending. Program EIRs were prepared for the approved plans, and will be prepared for the pending ones, but, to date, projects benefiting from the area planning and the program EIR have gotten those benefits essentially for free. This type of planning should be undertaken in many more neighborhoods. In addition, a fee representing the prorated share of the cost of preparing the area plan and program EIR should be charged to projects benefiting from the plan and EIR.

1.2.2 Workload and Funding Recommendations

1. Restore General Fund support for the Department, especially for the long-range-planning function. If there is any governmental function that should be funded out of the general tax base, it is planning. There is simply no way to change the focus from individual projects to real planning for the future without breaking the dependence on project fees as the source of planning funding.
2. Place more emphasis on plan development. The Planning Department needs the capacity to follow a prioritized, fully funded, implementable long-range-planning work plan, which will enable it to undertake needed neighborhood-by-neighborhood planning, keep the General Plan current, and be responsive to the needs of other agencies. Currently, only 24 staff positions of the Department's 148 are assigned to city-wide policy. Funding long-range planning adequately will help the Planning

Department more successfully take a leadership role in coordinating processes that involve multiple departments.

3. Establish a fee and revolving fund for programmatic Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) in neighborhoods expected to experience growth, or prepare program EIRs using cooperative agreements between individual project proponents, or other mechanisms.
4. Use internal guidelines or model documents to ensure standard formats for environmental documents, case reports, and motions.
5. Establish standard timelines or procedural benchmarks, and a “triage” system for screening all applications when they are received to ensure compliance with the Permit Streamlining Act and CEQA timelines.
6. Reduce the number and type of projects that require CU authorization. Strive through strong up-front planning, with extensive citizen participation, to gain consensus on the extent and scale of development. This will obviate the need for retaining CU control. The current Better Neighborhood Plans are a good model.
7. Reduce the number of permits that are subject to Discretionary Review (DR), and/or reduce the time spent by the staff and Commission in processing these reviews by establishing clear criteria and standards. Increase DR fees to match those required for appeals to the Board of Appeals. The goal is to keep the ability for residents to get a chance to improve poorly designed projects, while at the same time freeing up time of the Planning Commission so that it can focus on the larger planning issues. We should be able to strike a balance that achieves both objectives.
8. The Planning Department needs to work with the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to clarify the grounds on which the Board of Permit Appeals should overturn the Planning Department when the department has rejected a project. We suggest the starting place for such criteria be quite narrow, such as staff or Commission error in policy interpretation, or clear abuse of discretion.
9. The Board of Permit Appeals should eliminate the practice of reducing financial penalties imposed by the Planning or Building Inspection departments. This will reduce the incentive to project sponsors who appeal decisions by the Planning and Building Inspection departments only to get their penalties reduced.
10. Establish a mediation or consensus-building process as a way to deal with disputes between neighbors and project sponsors as an alternative to turning out large numbers of people to testify in public before the Planning Commission. This could be especially important as a better alternative to DR hearings.
11. Ensure that emerging policy in the long-range-policy section is integrated into the work of the current planning sections.
12. Stick to the established priorities and schedules for long-range planning activities. Too often, the Department starts a project only to have its priorities changed so that projects are not completed in a timely manner. Some of the problems with changing priorities can be solved with better internal discipline about not taking on too many different projects; however, this dynamic is even more tied to external demands placed on staff by the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.
13. Adequately fund and support code compliance activities undertaken by the Planning Department and ensure efficient coordination with the Building Department. Several other cities, including San Jose, have enforcement departments that serve several city departments. This could be a model for San Francisco.

14. Ensure that information technologies are adequately funded, possibly with a fee surcharge.
15. Provide training to the Planning Commissioners and to all staff who regularly apply qualitative design review criteria. Organizations such as the AIA and SPUR can help with this training.
16. Request that the City Controller undertake a complete audit of the Planning Department's fees and collection systems, and also make recommendations regarding quality assurance measures to validate time-accounting data that is routinely relied upon to establish fees for service. The Controller has a critical role to play here in improving the department.
17. Allocate funding for staff development. Not only is this important for morale and keeping people excited about their jobs, but it is important for keeping up with new developments in the field such as green building techniques and new mapping technologies. Staff development would also be beneficial in some other ways beyond what are normally considered planning skills, such as management training and consensus building.

1.3 INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION

1.3.1 Issues and Opportunities

Beyond formulation and application of the Planning Code, the Planning Department has limited power to carry out its own plans. This is part of the nature of the planning function of government. While the Department develops zoning for private land, it is a combination of land owners, developers, and citizens who fulfill the plan by actually building and inhabiting structures. When the Department develops plans for improvement to the public realm—streets, parks, transit lines, schools, water treatment plants, libraries, government office buildings, etc.—it is the various public works agencies and other City departments who actually build and operate the facilities. What this means is that in order to work, good planning requires constant coordination with other government agencies. Some of the most important opportunities for improving the effectiveness of the City's planning function lie in the area of cross-departmental coordination.

Let's consider some of the significant areas of interaction with other departments:

1.3.1.1 Capital Planning

To put it bluntly, there is essentially no comprehensive capital planning in San Francisco in the sense of someone figuring out all the infrastructure and investment needs the city faces and putting them in order of priority or timing them in a way that makes sense. There is no mechanism whereby a bond issue can cover the highest priority items of a number of departments. Instead, each functional agency (Schools, Rec. & Park, Library, etc.) prepares its own comprehensive capital program and, if it has enough clout, gets a bond measure on the ballot and its projects built. The November 2003 passage of Proposition B, for example, makes \$3 Billion available for specified transportation projects. This is essentially how almost all major capital projects are selected in San Francisco.

There is a Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC), an inter-agency group (including the Department of City Planning), charged with evaluating and recommending capital projects for annual funding. However, it has not been effective in setting capital spending priorities, largely because most capital funding comes from bond issues for single functional areas. Very little comes from the General Fund. In recent years, the CIAC's recommendations have been largely ignored in a political process that favors advocacy groups and political pressures that push their "pet" projects. The CIAC lacks the legal,

professional-planning, funding, and political stature to establish capital priorities that will be adopted in the City's annual budgetary process or bond program formulation. Because major infrastructure is so critical for determining the way the built environment in the city will evolve, and because the techniques of long-range planning are so well-developed in the Planning Department, we believe that planning should play a more important role in developing capital plans for the City and ensuring that all the different infrastructure efforts don't conflict with each other or with important city goals.

A second form of capital planning that should put the Planning Department in the lead role is the development of neighborhood plans. A good neighborhood plan will involve not just the rezoning of private land, but also a set of public improvements (wider sidewalks, traffic calming, park redesigns, transit improvements, etc.). This, indeed, was the promise of the three Better Neighborhoods 2002 programs. While two of these neighborhood-planning efforts are generally viewed as successes, in terms of bringing most of the stakeholders together to agree on a vision for neighborhood change, the Better Neighborhoods process has generally failed to deliver on the promise of improvements to the public realm. While the various implementing agencies—Muni, the Department of Parking and Traffic, Rec. & Park, the Department of Public Works, the Public Utilities Commission, etc.—sent staff people to some of the meetings, virtually none of these agencies has actually incorporated the Better Neighborhoods proposals into its capital plan or budget. It's as if no one, including the Planning Department, actually expected the plans to be taken seriously and truly implemented by other City departments.

1.3.1.2 General Plan Conformity

The City Charter requires that every public action taken in San Francisco that impacts land use must be referred to the Planning Department to review whether it is consistent with the General Plan prior to passage by the Board of Supervisors. This finding of General Plan conformity has been relegated to the tail end of every capital planning effort, making it essentially a meaningless rubber stamp. Evaluating consistency with the General Plan could and should be a real planning tool to ensure that other City departments are not acting as free agents, but are instead working together to fulfill long range plans for the city's evolution. Part of the problem is that the General Plan does not have up-to-date long-range policies for new facilities in its Community Facilities Element so there is little to measure conformity of a capital improvement proposal against. Another part of the problem has been that, while long-range capital improvement plans are developed by the operating departments, the Planning Department has had insufficient staff to more actively participate in development of the plans and the operating departments have often been reluctant to involve the Planning Department even when it has the staff.

1.3.1.3 Environmental Compliance

The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department is responsible for ensuring compliance with both CEQA and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) for all City departments. Since the environmental review process requires that alternatives to the proposed plan be formulated and evaluated, in theory the environmental review process could be a real planning tool if it were initiated at the beginning of a capital planning project and well integrated with the rest of the planning process.

1.3.1.4 Development on Port and Redevelopment Land

The Planning Department is usually involved, although often in a rather peripheral way, in the development of Port master plans and Redevelopment Agency redevelopment plans. Those plans are reviewed by the Planning Department against the City's General Plan. However, the staff and commissions at the Port and Redevelopment Agency, which can undertake development through long-term leases or sale of land, play a far more active role

in the development of the plans for specific sites and approval of individual projects, than do the Planning staff and Commission. Ideally, the Planning Department should be at the table, involved with the project planning and review work of these two agencies all along. As it is, these departments can and often do divest themselves of Planning Department participation and go their own way with only minor coordination, for a variety of reasons—staff shortages at the Planning Department, personality conflicts between agency heads, bureaucratic “turfing,” etc. A more appropriate relationship has been worked out in some recent redevelopment areas where the Redevelopment Agency promotes the development projects, often assisting with financing, and the Planning Department reviews the projects for Planning Code compliance. And a joint design review group from the Port and Planning Department has recently been established. These models should be continued and expanded.

1.3.1.5 Transportation Planning

It is very unclear who is responsible for transportation planning today. The Municipal Transportation Agency? the Department of Public Works? the County Transportation Authority? the Mayor? or the Planning Department?

The Planning Department should be the agency principally involved in land use planning and transportation policy. Land-use planning and transportation-policy formulation are the antecedents to good transportation planning. For example, the Housing Element of the General Plan, conforming zoning, and a policy commitment to transit-first all help the Transportation Agency develop the ridership estimates that in turn should (or will) influence where major investments in transit should be made, or where service delivery should change. The County Transportation Authority is the Congestion Management Agency of the County, has its own transportation model, access to funds, and is quite ready to do transportation planning, in the absence of direction from above and effective leadership and coordination between the Planning Department and the Municipal Transportation Agency in this realm. In years past, the Planning Department had a group of transportation planners which, although it was never easy, made it more possible to engage other agencies in collaborative planning. That staff has been eliminated in recent years, making it very difficult to bring the Department’s long-range planning perspective to bear on the activities of the agencies. The Department has been able to compensate somewhat, as it did in the Better Neighborhoods planning process, by engaging transportation consultants, but it no longer has the resources to do even that.

Developing improvement plans for the major transportation networks can and should draw on the skills and expertise of multiple agencies; but someone needs to be coordinating the planning efforts and making sure that the various implementing agencies are moving forward. In neighborhood plans and corridor plans, for example, the Planning Department needs to convince other departments that it can dedicate skilled personnel—either staff or consultants—to the tasks it should rightly do: setting guidelines for street right-of-way, for example. At a smaller scale, it may not matter if the urban designers work for the Planning Department or the Department of Parking and Traffic, so long as they provide direction for the work of the engineers. The Planning Department must have a central role in transportation planning both at the city-wide scale, at which transportation and land use are coordinated, and at the micro scale at which urban designers make human-scaled and comfortable public spaces.

In years past, the various transportation related agencies, including the Planning Department, participated in a Transportation Policy Group, which met regularly to review and discuss items that involved more than one agency. Any agency was permitted to put a topic or project on meeting agendas and the relevant personnel dealing with or interested that item attended meetings. While not a perfect solution, it did provide a mechanism for developing cooperation and avoiding conflict and bringing a comprehensive planning perspective to projects.

1.3.1.6 Co-Location of Staff

Part of the Planning Department staff (environmental review) is located at Van Ness and Market and the rest are located several blocks away in the permit center at Mission and Division. Other agencies with which the department needs to interact are scattered throughout the greater Civic Center area and beyond. For example, the Redevelopment Agency is located some distance away at Gough and Golden Gate. This physical separation severely inhibits both the formal and the informal interaction between staff at all levels, and coordination and cooperation suffer as a consequence. In planning space, and in particular, in programming space in the new City office building, consideration should be given to locating all the planning department staff together and in close proximity to other agencies with whom interaction is desirable.

1.3.1.7 Conflicts with the Building Code

As both the Planning and Building Codes are becoming more comprehensive, it is becoming apparent that there are conflicts between the Planning Code's intent to create a positive and pleasant living environment and the Building Code's mandate to maintain public safety. Modern living in a dense place like San Francisco requires ingenuity in maintaining safe building practices while encouraging imaginative design. There needs to be more coordination between the staffs of the Planning Department, the Building Department and the Fire Marshall in building code development. Many building codes are written nationally for the average suburban-type city—and are accepted on a statewide basis—but impede the design of buildings appropriate to our dense urban setting.

1.3.2 Interdepartmental Coordination Recommendations

1. Funding long-range planning adequately will help the Planning Department more successfully take a leadership role in coordinating processes that involve multiple departments.
2. The City should take seriously the requirement for review of General Plan conformity of public projects. We believe the General Plan can and should provide the overall framework for infrastructure investment and public realm improvements. This means that facilities plans in the General Plan need to be more comprehensive and current. This also means that Planning Department staff should participate from the outset with operating departments in the formulation of funding for various kinds of facilities.
3. Clarify the roles of the various administrative units involved with transportation planning (Municipal Transportation Agency, County Transportation Authority, Department of Parking and Traffic, Department of Public Works, Mayor's Office, and so on). The agreement(s) need to be formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) format and the connections of planning activities to General Plan update should be clearly spelled out. The connection between planning and each organization's capital program should be strengthened.
4. Reconstitute a Transportation Policy Group and charge department heads with the responsibility to participate at a high level.
5. Fund the Planning Department to rebuild a small staff of transportation planners within the long-range planning division. Or, failing that, provide it with funds to engage transportation planners as part of a planning team.
6. For major projects, form teams that include project managers from the relevant agencies along with environmental review staff in order to strengthen the ties between the environmental review process and the rest of the capital planning process.

7. Coordinate major capital projects out of the Mayor's Office when appropriate. In the past, this has led to some of the most successful examples of cross-departmental coordination because of the ability to compel participation among departments and resolve conflicts.
8. When undertaking future neighborhood planning initiatives such as the Better Neighborhoods Program, include a budget for staff time from other departments which will be responsible for implementing the public realm improvements. These neighborhood plans should do more than sketch ideas for public improvements; they should develop the public improvement plans enough to have realistic budgets. "Adoption" of the plan should include adoption of the various public improvements in the work plans of the implementing agencies.
9. Establish a Planning/Building/Fire Department staff task force that examines the ways that the building codes can be changed to reduce unnecessary restrictions on the design of new buildings and remodeling of existing buildings while maintaining the appropriate safety standards we need.
10. Bring together the Planning Department, Redevelopment Agency, and Port for more structured coordination on city-wide planning issues. If necessary, use the Mayor's Office to enforce cooperation.
11. Bring the Planning Department together in one location and locate the Department in close proximity to other Agencies with which coordination and cooperation are important.

CHAPTER 2: DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

2.1 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Building Inspection (DBI), formerly a division of the Department of Public Works, was established through a referendum approved by the voters in 1994. This change occurred as a result of citizens' perceptions that public safety and governmental services could be improved through greater independence of this organization. In recent times, the Department has come under the scrutiny of the Office of the Controller (in their report dated 6/11/2001), the Civil Grand Jury (in their report dated 6/11/2003), and the new Mayor (January 2004). The two reports delved into the workings of the Department in very great depth to reveal some substantial issues regarding its operations. It is not the purpose of the AIA or SPUR to assess the Department across its entire mission, but to identify the most salient and critical issues that the new Mayor and Board of Supervisors may wish to address for immediate action as well as longer-term improvements to City services.

The supervising body of the Department of Building Inspection is the Building Inspection Commission. It consists of seven members, four of whom are appointed by the Mayor and three of whom are appointed by the President of the Board of Supervisors. The appointments are legislated to represent specific areas of interest. The Mayor names a representative from a non-profit housing agency, a licensed architect, a licensed structural engineer, and a residential builder. The President of the Board of Supervisors names a residential tenant, a representative of the general public, and a residential landlord.

The Department has three primary functions focused on the health, safety, welfare, and building access for all people: 1) to review public, residential and commercial building plans and issue related permits for proposed and in-progress work; 2) to inspect buildings and sites for conformity with applicable statutes and codes; and 3) to perform investigations of violations of all codes and related health and safety statutes. The Permit Services and Inspection Services divisions are responsible for these charges.

The Department has a staff of 277 (December 2003). The management team of the Department consists of a Director, two Deputy Directors, an Assistant Director, and 18 Division Managers. The fiscal year 2002–2003 budget for the Department is \$28 million, generated by fees for the Department's services, not drawn from the City's General Fund. The Department may accumulate surplus revenue and create a reserve fund. The reserve fund stood at \$2.6 million in this fiscal year. In the current budget cycle, \$2.3 million was appropriated from this reserve fund to shore up the budget shortage at the Planning Department.

2.1.1 Problems with the Department of Building Inspection

Generally, the Department is perceived as lacking transparency and accountability in the work of its plan checkers and inspectors, lacking commitment to its mission by its employees and its staff, and confused about the interrelationship and authority among these Divisions. The Department has not undertaken the *Departmental Efficiency Plan*, inclusive of a strategic plan, as mandated by City Charter/policy. That *Plan* would broach the critical operational considerations required of every city department (see: SF Administrative Code, Chapter 88—Performance and Review Ordinance of 1999). The lack of clarity noted here manifests itself in a variety of ways:

- A lack of oversight by managers has been reported, most notably with the firing of the information systems manager over taking bribes. The result is a great deal of suspicion regarding the Department's honesty in its dealings with the public.

- There remains a lack of trust between some community groups and the Department, due to a perceived policy of favoritism towards certain building industry interests and individuals. The Department rejects this claim and has aggressively attempted to defend its integrity. This has resulted in a “siege” mentality within the Department and the Building Inspection Commission.
- Eleven percent of the annual building permit applications, accounting for at least 60% of the valuation of permitted construction and totaling approximately 3,000 applications, require weeks or even several months for approval. While 11% may not seem that high, many of these are electrical or mechanical permits which should get routine approval.
- There are only 18 district building inspectors (and even fewer plumbing and building inspectors) to address the scores of projects city-wide, plus two building inspectors for special projects. This results in a limited amount of time for inspectors to review projects under construction. Delays in obtaining required inspections are a continual source of frustration for owners and contractors alike.
- District building inspectors often attempt to override decisions previously made by plan checkers, resulting in confusing instructions by City officials during construction. These decisions are often perceived to be capricious and not founded in the Building Code. The delays and costs associated with resolving these conflicts can have a major impact on a project.
- There remain conflicts between State and City building officials as well as Fire Department personnel over the interpretation of many crucial provisions of the California Building and Fire codes.
- Projects are typically first reviewed and signed off by the Planning Department. It often happens that DBI’s review results in changes which should be further reviewed by the Planning Department. This would eliminate a frequent complaint by neighbors that what they reviewed during Planning’s review process is not what actually gets built.

2.2 DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mayor and Board of Supervisors can impact this Department by focusing on enhanced leadership and management as the element critical to improving the performance of DBI. There are a number of reasonable actions that could be immediately implemented and that would go far in remedying the issues that plague the Department:

1. The Controller, under his new authority as City Services Auditor (from Prop. C of November 2003), should audit the processes and procedures of the Department, including the permit applications that must be reviewed by several divisions. The goal is to develop a more efficient application of labor and resources.
2. With the likelihood that district inspectors will be taking on more tasks as a result of pending legislation at the Planning Department, increase the number of district building inspectors. Even without new duties, there is a shortage of inspectors.
3. Create a mechanism for giving feedback to the Planning Department and to neighbors of a project when DBI approves changes that will affect the design of a project. Too often, major changes are made after the public hearing at Planning that no one ever hears about or has the chance to contest. Adjustments are always required as the construction process unfolds on-site, but DBI needs to be held

accountable to not allow major changes that impact the surrounding area without going through a public process.

4. Develop procedures to handle periods of peak activity. The workload simply is not constant. Solutions could include hiring part-time plan checkers or allowing overtime pay for staff when there is a backlog.
5. Enhance and enlarge the “one stop permit center” to include the review of projects that are currently reviewed by more than one division within the Department. Most small projects get reviewed by a plan checker, the electrical division, the mechanical division, and the structural division. Plan checkers are generally capable of doing most of these reviews.
6. Instruct the senior management and hearing officers to more actively participate in the International Code Council (ICC), National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), and the State of California Building Standards Commission’s committees to allow for better coordination between State and City Building Codes. As a compact and built-up city, San Francisco needs modifications to the State code that reflect this difference beyond what are now in place.
7. Modernize the technology infrastructure to enable connectivity between all intra-department sectors. One solution could be to have staff from DBI be represented on the City’s Commission on Information Technology and work with the Department of Technical Information Systems. Additionally, and to the extent practicable, expand this interconnectivity to related city departments, especially the Planning Department. Other examples of technology upgrades that would improve efficiency include providing hand-held computers for inspectors to take on-site and allowing applicants to check permit status or make appointments with inspectors on-line.
8. Define and implement a comprehensive staff/professional training program to develop new competencies critical to the mission of the department. Surplus dollars should be budgeted for staff training and infrastructure.
9. Determine actual cost of service, i.e. validate the existing fee structure, as required by state law. In order to be in compliance with state law, which requires a “nexus” between the fee charged and the cost of providing the public service, an audit of the costs needs to be performed, most likely leading to a revision to the DBI fee schedule.
10. Clarify the areas of responsibility and authority between the Department and the San Francisco Fire Department, direct both departments to collaborate on the development and publication of that understanding, and direct them to enhance their cooperation during plan check and inspection activities. When plan checks result in significant changes to the Planning Department reviews, the projects should be sent back to The Planning Department for their further review. Establish a Planning/Building/Fire Department staff task force that examines the ways that the building codes can be changed to reduce unnecessary restrictions on the design of new buildings and remodeling of existing buildings while maintaining the appropriate safety standards we need.

3. CONCLUSION

San Franciscans know what they want in their city. They have made it clear over and over that gorgeous parks, efficient public transit, good housing, and healthy neighborhoods are very important to the quality of their lives. Many public officials have worked to help realize these goals. The Mayor and the Board of Supervisors have traditionally been in the forefront of these issues.

All cities go through good and bad economic times. Good planning can enhance the good times and lessen the impact of the bad times. It prevents haphazard development and provides a practical way to implement long-range goals. Today our planning and building process is in need of help. The results of these efforts are suggested changes in the process that would improve the lives of everyone living in San Francisco.

APPENDIX I: IMPLEMENTATION

This paper contains 36 recommendations relating to the Planning Department and 10 recommendations relating to the Department of Building Inspection. These recommendations need to be implemented in a variety of ways. Some require funding which, in these hard economic times, may not be immediately forthcoming. Some recommendations call for fee increases or new fees which would serve to augment city funds. Other recommendations require legislation and thus would require the approval of the Mayor and Board of Supervisors. Still others call for administrative action, sometimes through MOUs, sometimes through executive orders, and others simply through adoption of departmental policy. SPUR and the AIA intend to adopt as a priority project for 2004 (and however much longer it takes) the advocacy and oversight of the implementation of these 47 recommendations. The recommendations, organized by type of implementation action required, are summarized below.

Recommendations Involving Planning Department Policy

- Establish Timelines and “triage” system for screening permit applications (WklF # 5)
- Develop standard formats for case reports, etc. (WklF # 4)
- Stick to established priorities and schedules for long-range planning (WklF # 13)
- Collaborate with SPUR and AIA for training (WklF # 16)
- Strengthen ties between environmental review and capital planning processes (Coord # 6)
- Integrate emerging policy with current planning activities (WklF # 12)
- Be more disciplined at delivering work products on time and on budget, and at staying with a work program until it is completed (Gov # 7)

Recommendations Involving Planning Department Policy and Requiring Endorsement by the Mayor and Supervisors

- Develop “Big Picture” strategy (Gov # 3)

Recommendations Involving Building Department Policy

- Develop mechanism to give feedback to the Planning Department when Building Department changes to Planning Department–approved projects affect design (BldgDept # 3)
- Develop procedures to handle periods of peak activity (BldgDept # 4)
- Participate more actively in code-writing organizations (BldgDept # 6)
- Develop a professional training program (BldgDept # 8)

Recommendations Requiring Legislation

- Modify fee structure to reflect actual cost of service (BldgDept # 9)
- Reduce number of CU cases heard by Board of Supervisors (Gov # 6)
- Establish fee to recover cost of preparing area plans and program EIRs and use receipts for additional area plans and program EIRs (WklF # 3)

- Reduce number of environmental review appeals heard by the Board of Supervisors (Gov # 8)
- Reduce types of projects requiring CU approval (WklF # 6)
- Reduce number of DR cases heard by the Planning Commission (WklF # 8)
- Establish mediation process as alternative to DR (WklF # 11)

Recommendations Requiring Funding

- Increase the number of district building inspectors (BldgDept # 2)
- Enhance and enlarge the “one stop permit center” (BldgDept # 5)
- Modernize technology infrastructure (BldgDept # 7)
- Pay for general planning out of General Fund, not project fees (WklF # 1)
- Adequately fund long-range planning (WklF # 2, Coord # 1)
- Undertake additional Better Neighborhoods–type area plans (WklF # 6)
- Adequately fund code enforcement (WklF # 14)
- Adequately fund information technologies. Consider fee increase to cover costs (WklF # 15)
- Allocate funding for staff development (WklF # 18)
- Add transportation planners to DP planning staff (Coord # 5)
- Involve Planning staff in development of bond proposals of other departments (Coord # 2)
- Include funds for staff of other agencies in budgets for future Better Neighborhoods–type plans and as part of plan approval. Include work plans for other agencies to implement public improvements (Coord # 8)

Recommendations Requiring Mayoral Policy and/or Executive Order

- Establish Planning/Building/Fire Department Task Force to examine building code to reduce unnecessary restrictions (BldgDept # 10)
- Clarify roles of agencies in transportation planning (Coord # 3)
- Reestablish a Transportation Policy Group (Coord # 4)
- Establish Planning/Building/Fire Department Task Force to examine building code to reduce unnecessary restrictions (Coord # 9)
- Enforce coordination/cooperation between the Planning Department, Redevelopment Agency, and Port Authority (Coord # 10)
- Use Project Managers from the Mayor’s office to coordinate major projects involving multiple agencies (Coord # 7)
- Bring the Planning Department together in one location and locate the department in close proximity to other agencies with which coordination and cooperation are important (Coord #11)

Recommendations Involving the Controller

- Urge Controller to audit the processes and procedures of the Building Department (BldgDept # 1)

Recommendations Requiring Charter Amendment

- Exempt top staff from Civil Service requirements (Gov # 2)

Recommendations Requiring Policy of Mayor and Board of Supervisors

- Establish qualifications of appointees to Planning Commission and Board of Appeals and require participation of appointees in orientation (Gov # 5)
- Establish qualifications for members of the Planning Commission and Board of Appeals (Gov # 4)

Recommendations Requiring Planning Commission and Mayoral Policy

- Establish vision and management skills as qualifications of Planning Director (Gov # 1)

Recommendations Involving the Board of Appeals

- Require the Board of Appeals to provide greater support to Planning Department decisions (WklF # 9)
- Urge Controller to undertake complete audit of Planning Department fees and collection systems (WklF # 17)
- Discontinue the practice of reducing financial penalties imposed by the Planning or Building Departments (WklF # 10)

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